REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-10 and 12-18 remain in the application. Claim 10 has been amended. Claim 11 has been cancelled.

In the section entitled "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102" on pages 2-3 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1 and 10-13 have been rejected as being anticipated by Lovett et al. (US Pat. No. 6,591,370 B1) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

In the section entitled "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103" on pages 3-6 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1-18 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Rubinstein (US Pat. No. 5,077,686) in view of Barbera et al. (US Pat. No. 5,479,648) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

The rejections have been noted and claim 10 has been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. Support for the changes is found in original claim 11.

As will be explained below, it is believed that claim 1 was patentable over the cited art in its original form and claim 1 has, therefore, not been amended to overcome the references.

Before discussing the prior art in detail, it is believed that a brief review of the invention as claimed, would be helpful.

Claim 1 calls for, inter alia:

> A device for synchronizing processes which run on a plurality of units including a central unit linked with other units via a field bus, comprising:
>
> a device provided in the central unit for producing a system clock;
>
> a vacant line provided in the field bus for distributing said system clock to the other units.

Claim 10 calls for, inter alia:

> at regular intervals, synchronizing the other units to an absolute time.

Lovett et al. do not teach a field bus that links the central unit with the other units and a vacant line provided in the filed bus for distributing the system clock, as recited in claim 1 of the instant application. Claim 1 is, therefore, believed to be patentable over Lovett et al.

With regard to claim 10 of the instant application, Lovett et al. only teach synchronizing other units to an absolute time,

but not at regular intervals. According to column 3, line 65 to column 4, line 20 of Lovett et al., a synchronization method is disclosed to integrate added computer nodes with their own local clocks and their own computer processors to an existing network of other computer nodes. Therefore, the method of Lovett et al. is provided to allow synchronizing the added computer node to the existing computer nodes. The synchronization method is only required when the new node is added to the existing network, but is not done at regular time intervals or even permanently. After the new node has been integrated into the network and has been synchronized to the other nodes, no more synchronization for the newly added node is required or actually done.

The basic concept of Lovett et al. is to add a new computer node to an existing network of computer nodes and integrate the newly introduced node by performing a synchronization method once. Lovett et al. do not contain any hint or suggestion that the synchronization method should be performed at regular time intervals. Claim 10 of the instant application is, therefore, believed to be patentable over Lovett et al.

With respect to claim 13 of the instant application, there is no hint in Lovett et al., especially not in Fig. 4 or column

8, lines 65-67 (which is a part of claim 25) cited by the Examiner, that processes in their module clocks are driven down upon failure of the system clock. Such failure is mentioned nowhere in Lovett et al. and claim 13 can therefore not be anticipated by Lovett et al.

The rejection over the combination of Rubinstein and Barbera et al. has already been discussed in detail in the previous response. Rubinstein only teaches one central clock generator 201 and frequency multipliers connected to a central clock unit. In other words, Rubinstein is only related to computer systems like PCs and laptops having only one clock generator and no local clock generators. Therefore, it does not make sense to say that in Rubinstein the system clock synchroizes the module clocks at regular intervals because there are no module clocks in Rubinstein.

The Examiner has cited column 7, lines 9-60 of Rubinstein as teaching synchronizing the other units to an absolute time at regular intervals. However, Applicants cannot read anywhere in the text passage in column 7, lines 9-60 of Rubinstein the synchronization to an absolute time at regular intervals. In fact, this text passage only teaches a circuit, which can provide a clock speed that is a multiple of the system clock speed. This is different than the fact that the system clock

produced in the cnetral unit synchronizes the module clocks produced in the other units to an abosolute time at regular intervals, as recited in claim 10 of the instant application. In addition, nowhere in Rubinstein is it taught that the multiplication of the system clock speed should be done at regular intervals.

Barbera et al. only teach switching clock signals with no regularly repeated synchronization of the clock signals to be switched. The synchronization only happens during the switching process, but not during a normal running process of the computer system.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claim 10. Claim 10 is, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art and since claims 12-18 are dependent on claim 10, they are believed to be patentable as well.

Since claims 1-9 are directed to the system implementing the method of claims 10 and 12-18, it is believed that Rubinstein and Barbera et al., whether taken alone or in any combination, do not show or suggest the features of claim 1. Claim 1 is, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art and since

claims 2-9 are ultimately dependent on claim 1, they are believed to be patentable as well.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-10 and 12-18 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out. In the alternative, the entry of the amendment is requested as it is believed to place the application in better condition for appeal, without requiring extension of the field of search.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made. Please charge any fees which might be due with respect to 37 CFR Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to

the Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

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April 7, 2005

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